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WILLIAM BILES.

BY MILES WHITE, JR., BALTIMORE, MD.

(Continued from page 70.)

William Biles, at different times, was a witness to many wills, deeds, etc., and the fac-simile of his signature, given herein, is taken from the will of Jacob Janney, of Bucks County, dated 8th mo. 2, 1708, and still preserved in the office of the Register of Wills at Philadelphia.

An election was ordered for February.20, 1682, for members of Council and Assembly, to be holden at Philadelphia March 10 following, when William Biles, Christopher Taylor, and James Harrison were elected to the Council from Bucks County.[1]

The first session of this first Council was held in Philadelphia 1st mo. 10, 1682/3, and was presided over by William Penn in person;[2] William Biles was present, and seems to have been regular in his attendance during its sessions and to have taken an important part in framing the laws; on the 16th, 21st, and 26th insts. he was appointed on committees to which were referred the preparation of various bills for the Council,[3] and on 7th mo. 8, 1683, he and three others were appointed "to bring in a Bill concerning horses goeing out and comeing into this Province." He was also present (2d mo. 2, 1683) when the Great Charter was read and thankfully received, and was one of those who signed it.[4]

We find that, according to the entry in the original

[1] Davis's *Hist. Bucks Co.*, p. 65.

[2] *Colonial Records*, vol. i. p. 1; Proud's *Hist. Penna.*, vol i. p. 235; *Delaware Register*, vol. i. p. 331.

[3] *Colonial Records*, vol i. pp. 6, 8, 11, 24.

[4] Ibid., pp. xl, 16; Proud's *Hist. Penna.*, vol. i. p. 239; vol. ii. Appendix, p. 28; Davis's *Hist. Bucks Co.*, p. 65.

records of Bucks County of 1684,[1] showing ear-marks or brands, that William Biles, William Biles, Jr., and Charles Biles were then owners of cattle.

On May 22, 1684, the Provincial Council appointed[2] "One Inferior receiver in Every County, who shall receive directions from y^e^ Deputy Treasurer, who shall receive Instructions from y^e^ Gov^r^ and Councill; who Shall not be allowed above 20 lb. p. year;" among whom was "Wm. Biles, for Bucks;" and on February 11, 1685, William Biles and others were appointed to lay out a road in Bucks County.[3] The Council (2d mo. 6, 1685) "Ordered that a Comission be drawne for James Harrison, Tho: Janney, Wm. Yardley, Wm. Biles, Wm. Beaks, John Ottor, Edm^d^ Bennet & Jno. Swift, to be Justices of the Peace for y^e^ County of Bucks, the year Ensueing."[4] Until the Revolution, justices of the peace were judges in the County Courts in Pennsylvania.

The Council[5] (10th mo. 1, 1685), having been requested that a "Speciall Comission be granted for y^e^ Tryall of David Davis the next Court, who is a Prisoner in y^e^ County of Bucks, on suspition of killing his servant," unanimously agreed "that a Comission be Expeditiously prepared for y^e^ authorising & Impowring of James Harrison, Arthur Cook, Tho. Janney, Wm. Yardley, Wm. Biles, to be special Comiss^rs^ to hear and Determine all heinous and Enormous Crimes that shall be brought before them in y^e^ County of Bucks, in a Court there to begin on y^e^ 10^th^ Ins^t^, by them to be held."

The first session of the Assembly to which William Biles was elected was that of 1686, beginning 3d mo. 10 at Philadelphia, and on 3d mo. 11 he and Cornelius Empson were fined twelve pence each for being absent the previous day;[6]

[1] *Colonial Records*, p. 77.
[2] Ibid., vol. i. p. 57; Battle's *Bucks Co.*, p. 194.
[3] Ibid., p. 184. [4] Ibid., vol. i. p. 76.
[5] Ibid., p. 114; Battle's *Bucks Co.*, p. 246.
[6] *Votes of Assembly*, vol. i. pt. 1, p. 37.

and William Yardley and he were appointed a committee to acquaint the Council that the Assembly desired to meet the President and Council in a full body. He was a member of the Council and Assembly for so many years that an enumeration of all the committees on which he served would occupy too much space, and mention of only some of the more important ones must suffice. He was frequently appointed to acquaint the Council of the acts or desires of the Assembly, and was often a member of the Committee on "Aggrievances," through the medium of which much of the ordinary business of the Assembly was first brought before the House.

In 1687 the tax levied was given to William Biles to collect;[1] and in this year we are informed[2] that "Wm. Biles, the only merchant along the Delaware who imported and sold Rum, a leading Friend, and several times elected to the Assembly, was called to account for selling rum to the Indians, and Thomas Janney and William Yardley were appointed to wait on him." He said to them[3] that it was "not against the Law neither doth he know that it is any evil to do so, but however, if Friends desire him not to do it, he will for the future forbear it;" which caused a writer in the *Friends' Intelligencer* to say, "It was a remarkable act of a Christian man that he should discontinue to sell rum to the Indians, on account of the desire of his brethren, when it was neither a violation of law nor the Discipline."

In 1689 he served his second term in the Assembly, and was present at the opening session, 3d mo. 10; and he and Joseph Fisher were requested to find out whether the Governor and Council could listen to some proposals from the Assembly.[4] He was appointed also on the Committee on "Aggrievances."

[1] Battle's *Bucks Co.*, p. 189.

[2] Davis's *Hist. Bucks Co.*, p. 835.

[3] MS. Minutes Falls Monthly Meeting; *Friends' Intelligencer*, vol. lvi. p. 489.

[4] *Votes of Assembly*, vol. i. pt. 1, p. 48.

On 11th mo. 2, 1689/90, the Council[1] ordered that "Commissions of y^e^ Peace be made for all y^e^ Counties, and these persons ffollowing to be Inserted, (viz) Bucks Co. Arth. Cook, Jos. Growdon, Wm. Yardly, Tho. Janney, Wm. Byles, Nich. Newlin, Jo^n^ Brock, Hen. Baker."

In March, 1690, the grand jury thought it necessary that the county be divided into townships, and the court, at its next session, ordered Henry Baker and eleven others, including William Biles, to meet together at the court-house the day before the next court and perform this service; for some reason this order was not obeyed, and at the September term, 1692, the court again took up the matter and appointed a jury, on which were Arthur Cook[2] and twelve others, including William Biles (nine members of the former jury being reappointed), and ordered them "or the greater number of them to meet together at the meeting-house at Neshaminah the 27th day of this instant, and divide this county into townships," which they accordingly did.

Only fragments of the minutes of Councils for 1692 and 1693 (prior to April 26, when Governor Fletcher arrived) remain; and though William Biles was a member[3] for these sessions, it is not known whether or not he took an active part in the proceedings.

The Council of 1693[4] "came on the scene in the midst of very unsettled times; the dissensions of the past two years were still rampant, while hardly had the Council begun its administration when it was deposed by the arrival of Governor Fletcher, with his commission from the Crown, to assume Penn's government, and was supplanted by a new Council appointed by him," and William Biles, who had

[1] *Colonial Records*, vol. i. p. 278; Buck's *Bucks Co., Pa.*, p. 23.

[2] *Publications* So. Hist. Assoc., vol. v. pp. 393, 394; Battle's *Bucks Co.*, p. 190; Davis's *Hist. Bucks Co.*, p. 101; PA. MAG. HIST. AND BIOG., vol. xviii. p. 24.

[3] *Charter to William Penn* and *Duke of York's Laws*, p. 537; PA. MAG. HIST. AND BIOG., vol. xi. pp. 151–159.

[4] Ibid., vol. xviii. p. 25.

been elected for the years 1692, 1693, and 1694, went out of the Council.

In 1694 William Biles was again in the Assembly which met 2d mo. 10, 1694, at Philadelphia, and served on the Committee on "Aggrievances,"[1] and on 4th mo. 9 he and three others were ordered to attend the Governor and Council, with the Remonstrance drawn in answer to the Queen's letter and Governor's speech, and to inquire what had been done concerning the bills sent up.

In 1695 Joseph Growden, Phineas Pemberton, and William Biles were elected from Bucks County to the Council which met on April 20,[2] and on the 22d the return of the Sheriff of Bucks County of representatives in Council was read and rejected, "becaus it did not mention the day of their election, nor the rexive years for which the members were to serve;"[3] and on the 24th it was "Ordered, that new writts be issued for their election of representatives upon y^e^ 8^th^ of May next," when William Biles was elected for one year. On May 28 he and one member from each of the other counties "were appointed to Consider of a new frame & modell of governm^t^ & to make report to the Governo^r^ & Councill this afternoon." They reported,—

"That they had made some attempts, but Could not agree upon a new frame," and Governor Markham appointed the same committee to meet with him about it. The next day they reported[4] "That nothing could be agreed upon in ord^r^ to a new modell of governm^t^ notwithstanding all y^e^ pains & time spent about y^e^ same." The Governor addressed the Council, and upbraided them for taking up much time in endeavoring to lay aside the Charter, which had previously been thankfully accepted, and endeavoring unsuccessfully to make a more easy frame of government; and since the object of their meeting was to advise with him in matters relating to the government, he informed them that the Queen, upon the 21st of August, 1694, had signified, "That a Quota not exceeding eighty men, with their officers, or the value of the chairges

[1] *Votes of Assembly*, vol. i. pt. 1, p. 88.
[2] Battle's *Bucks Co.*, p. 200.
[3] *Colonial Records*, vol. i. pp. 447, 448.
[4] Ibid., pp. 450, 451.

of maintaining y^e^ same, be the measure of the assistance to be given by y^e^ sd province of pennsilvania & Countrie of Newcastle for y^e^ defence & securitie of the province of New-York," etc.

This question occupied the attention of the Legislature for more than one session, for in 1696[1] we again find William Biles a member of the Assembly which met 8th mo. 26 at Philadelphia, and on the 30th he was appointed on a committee to consider a way to answer the Queen's letter and preserve the people's privileges.[2] On the 31st they reported that they had an expedient ready to answer the Queen's letter, but that they recommended before this was put into effect the provisions of the old Charter (that before Governor Fletcher's time) in regard to election of Councillors and Assemblymen should be put in force.

William Biles was returned, as elected, to the Council that met in Philadelphia May 10, 1698, and took his seat on the 11th inst.;[3] and likewise to the Council that met May 10, 1699,[4] on which date he "did subscribe the declaraon of fidelity, the profession of the Christian belief, & the test."

The Council which met March 30, 1700, received on April 1 the return of the Sheriff of Bucks County of representatives in Council, from which it appears that William Biles was elected for two years,[5] and appeared and took his seat; and on April 10, the question of laws for securing the people's property in Overplus Lands being debated and left to the consideration of the Governor and Council, "y^e^ prov. Gov. appointed John Simcoke, Joseph Growdon and Wm. Biles[6] to meet him att night to consider yrof, & as neer as might be, to adjust y^e^ rates of overplus Lands, according to their neerness to or remoteness from y^e^ town of philadelphia."

On June 7, 1700, the opposition between the members of

[1] *Colonial Records*, p. 468.
[2] *Votes of Assembly*, vol. i. pt. 1, p. 94.
[3] *Colonial Records*, vol. i. p. 515.
[4] Ibid., p. 536. [5] Ibid., p. 568. [6] Ibid., p. 573.

the upper and lower counties about the number of members and representatives, charges, etc., prevented an agreement about the proposed new Charter,[1] and it having been voted that they would not be governed by the old Charter, but that Penn should resume government under letters patent of King Charles II., the Speaker, in behalf of the representatives in Assembly, William Biles and John Hill, in behalf of those in Council, for the Province and territories respectively, by the unanimous consent of all members present of both Council and Assembly, took the Charter and delivered it up to the Proprietary and Governor.

On October 24, at a Council held at New Castle, the Proprietary "sent for ph. pemberton, Wm. Biles & Jn° Blunston,[2] who having been qualified to be of y° Council, took yr places att y° board."

As William Biles went to England in 1701, he was absent from the meetings of Council that year.

Not only was he a member of the Council for the years 1698–1701, as above stated, but he was also during the years 1699–1701 a Puisne Judge, or one of the Justices of the highest court in the Province.[3] Prior to 1790 the Court of Oyer and Terminer, for trial of higher crimes and appeal, was held by the Justices of the Provincial or Supreme Court, who made a circuit of the counties at stated times, and we find that on April 18, 1699, Edward Shippen, Cornelius Empson, and William Biles held court at Chester.

In 1700 Phineas Pemberton, William Biles, and Richard Hough were appointed Judges of a Court of Inquiry "For the compleat Settling and Establishing of Affairs of Property in this the County of Bucks." That the powers of this Court were very extensive is shown by their commission signed by William Penn 10th mo. 18, 1700, which is given in full in Buck's *History of Bucks County*.[4]

During the early days of the Province there were no

[1] *Colonial Records*, p. 588. [2] Ibid., p. 592.

[3] *Pa. Arch.*, 2d ser., vol. ix. p. 630; *Hist. Chester Co., Pa.*, p. 370.

[4] P. 23; see Battle's *Bucks Co.*, p. 366.

lawyers there, but William Biles and others appeared for their neighbors and friends, and were called attorneys. It also appears that in December, 1702, the court adjourned to William Biles's house;[1] this was soon after his return from England.

At the Assembly begun at Philadelphia on October 15, 1703, William Biles was present and signed the declaration and test,[2] and on August 21, 1704, he informed the House,[3] "that *Nathaniel Puckle* had a Letter from the *Proprietary* to be communicated to several Persons here, encouraging them to *insist* upon the Privileges of their Charter and Laws, and not tamely give them up; and instanced what Advantage it has been to the People of *Rhode-Island*, *Connecticut*, and other Proprietary Governments, to assert their Rights," etc.

James Logan, writing to Penn 9th mo. 22, 1704, says,[4] "That ridiculous old man, W. Biles, frequently affirms they will never grant one penny on any account till they have all their privileges explained and confirmed."

In 1704 the animosity between the Proprietary's adherents and his opponents, which had long been an undercurrent in politics, broke forth with great violence, and the country became distinctly divided into two political parties, the Proprietary or Aristocratic and the Popular or Democratic, the former under the leadership of Logan and the latter under that of David Lloyd. William Biles belonged to the latter, while some of his neighbors and personal friends belonged to the former, and were his bitter political enemies.

Logan spoke in such strongly adverse terms of the prominent members of the Popular party that the editor of the *Penn-Logan Correspondence* felt called upon several times to make excuses for him, and to say,[5] "such was the Secretary's

[1] Battle's *Bucks Co.*, pp. 250, 205.

[2] Proud's *Hist. Penna.*, vol. i. p. 455 n.

[3] *Historical Review of Const. and Govt. of Penna.*, p. 65 n.

[4] *Penn-Logan Corresp.*, vol. i. p. 344.

[5] Ibid., vol. ii. p. 34.

zeal for the Proprietary interests that he was not inclined to regard with favor those who were arrayed against them." In his letters to Penn he says,[1]—

"This people think privileges their due, and all that can be grasped to be their native right. . . . They think it their business to secure themselves against a queen's government;" and again,[2] "The generality, however, are honestly and well inclined, and out of assembly are very good men; but when got together, I know not how they are infatuated and led by smooth stories."

The fact that Logan spoke in harsh terms of the public acts of Biles and others does not seem to have affected his regard for and intercourse with them personally; for, after the Evans affair had occurred, we find him writing to William Biles under date of 8th mo. 11, 1708,[3] beginning the letter, "Loving Friend," and closing it, "I am thy well-wishing friend." This letter was partly in regard to a claim of certain persons to Biles's Island, and Logan states, "I will spare no pains nor cost to convince these persons, whoever they are, that they have been in the wrong," etc.

William Biles was Treasurer of Bucks County in 1704,[4] and also collector of money granted the Proprietary by the Legislature; and on March 28[5] he and the other collectors of this fund were summoned to attend the Council, and "to answer for their neglect in Collecting y^e^ sd Tax within their several Districts." He was also a member of the Assembly which met at Philadelphia October 14, 1704, and was one of the committee[6] to which the bill for "the Affirmations to pass in Lieu of Oaths," etc., was committed, 8th mo. 26, and 9th mo. 14 on the committee to prepare the *Votes of Assembly* for publication, and on adjournment of the Assembly (3d mo. 23, 1705) was sued by Governor Evans in an action of £2000 pounds, as related by Logan,[7] "for saying these words on the 11th-month last; '*He is but a*

[1] *Penn-Logan Corresp.*, vol. i. p. 299.
[2] Ibid., vol. i. p. 323.
[3] Ibid., vol. ii. p. 299.
[4] *Pa. Arch.*, 2d ser., vol. ix. pp. 744, 743.
[5] *Colonial Records*, vol. ii. p. 124.
[6] *Votes of Assembly*, vol. i. pt. 2, p. 22.
[7] *Penn-Logan Corresp.*, vol. ii. p. 33.

boy; he is not fit to be our Governour. We'll kick him out; we'll kick him out.' And at the ensuing Court, himself not appearing, and David Lloyd, his attorney, demurring upon a plea of privilege as an Assemblyman, which was overruled, he was ordered to plead over and come to an issuable plea; but this he refused, and therefore judgment went against him yesterday. A jury of inquiry sat upon the damages, and found £300 to the Governour."[1]

William Biles wrote a letter to Governor Evans, the original of which is now in the library of the Historical Society of Pennsylvania. It has never been published, and is as follows:

[3d mo. 1705.]

"To John Evans Esq^{r} Liftenant Gover^{r} of the provience of pensilvania.

"the pettition of Wm Biles of y^{e} County of bucks In all humble manner sheweth

"that thou was pleased to comence an action against me upon Supposesion that I had spoken sum scandelous words of thee but thorough the Inadvertansy or desine of the shreife hee Sumoned me upon the day that I was actually conserned In the servis of the assembley of this provience which ocationed me to plead or Insist upon my priviledge as I was and am a member of that assembley and for that and no other Reason I declined Answering thy declaration and making further defense to thy suit and had it not been for yt I doubt not but I would have produsd such proofe as might have Invalidated that single evidence given against me or at Least Rendered It In Efectuall to maintaine thy—declaration and for my owne part I can singly say that I do not Remember that I ever spoke those words as A Leaged In yt declaration but In Regard thou hast given unto such Information and conserned so much displeasure against me and although thou hast given mee sum discouragement to make any further Application to thee upon that account never the Less I hope thou will not be offended at these few Leines whear by I do signifie unto thee as before I have done that I am

[1] The editor of *Penn-Logan Correspondence* (vol. ii. p. 131) remarks that "The plain import of the words was that Evans was a boy, and deserved to be turned out; the correctness of which was shown in the fact that suit was brought in a spirit of boyish petulance, and with the hope that some money might be made out of it. His course (as shown in Logan's letter of 4th mo. 12, 1706) fully establishes the truth of Biles's statement, and much more."

hearttily sorrey for any words by me spoaken at any time conserning thee which hath given thee any Just ocation of ofence neither did I ever act any thing against thee to thy hurt therefore I desiar that thou would be pleased to pas by yt which cannot be recaled and for the future I do Intend to be carfull of ofending thee

"WM BILES."

As this affair has caused William Biles more notoriety than any other event, it will probably be of interest to note some of the actions taken by the Assembly and Council in regard thereto, as it occupied the attention of both Houses on several days, and the *Votes of Assembly* and *Colonial Records* contain the proceedings in full.[1] Before doing this, however, it will be well to make some investigation as to Governor Evans.

John Evans, who succeeded Hamilton as Deputy Governor in 1704, was at the time of his appointment only twenty-six years of age, was an officer of the Queen's household, and in consequence of his previous surroundings had little sympathy with the life and character of Pennsylvania Friends.[2] With his first interview with the Assembly began a quarrel which, owing to his want of tact and his disorderly life, eventually enabled the faction of David Lloyd to thwart all his projects.[3]

Benjamin Franklin says of him,[4]—

"So unpopular was he, that an unanimous Vote of Thanks to the Proprietary was passed on his being removed, almost before his Face, for he was still a Resident amongst them."

Rev. Edward D. Neill concludes his narrative of Evans's chastisement by a countryman, whom he had ordered to turn his loaded wagon out of the road so that he, who was on foot, might pass, with the statement that "At length the

[1] *Votes of Assembly*, vol. i. pt. 2, pp. 43–48; *Colonial Records*, vol. ii. pp. 205–209.

[2] Armor's *Lives of the Governors of Penna.*, pp. 118–121; Egle's *History of Penna.*, p. 61.

[3] Keith's *Lives of Provincial Councillors*, p. 7.

[4] *Historical Review of Const. and Govt. of Penna.*, p. 71.

waggoner discovered that every governor was not a gentleman, and that he had assaulted Governor Evans;" [1] and adds, "the private life of Evans was as censurable as his public conduct."

William Penn wrote to Governor Evans 7th mo. 30, 1705,[2]—

"*Much is said of the Lewdnes of Pennsylvania. I beg of thee to have regard to my Character* and give not that advantage against me either with God or good or bad men whose ill use of it I most fear, on a publick acct. I have just now Rec'd thine of 5th 5 mo (July) and am very Sorry that wicked man D. L. could blow up any of his Mermidons to such a pitch of brutishness as thy Acct. of William Biles relates that is a meer vox et praeterea nihil, a Coxcomb, and a Prag-matick in graine. That fellow's plantation is a Robbery upon Pennsbury,[3] and if there be a grant, was not a purchase from me, nor any Towed Land writs, for it was surveyed long before and done in my absence, formerly, and Judge Mompresson can tell if I may not be deceived, in my Grant as well as the Crown, be it King or Queen,—Since, if confirmed, it was upon Surprize, and rattle an Inquisition about his eares, if not a prosecution. And know that when the time is expired of Session he may be taken to task, Since the Service he may pretend he was to attend is over. And first complain to the Friends, and if they wont or cant bow him to make Satisfaction, take it by Law thy Selfe. Pray mind what I say, be Secret, which is discreet, and fall on him or any other such unruly People at once, and make Some one Example to terrifie the rest. Thou hast not only my leave, but liking and encouragement whether called Quakers or others."

Governor Evans's subsequent action in regard to William Biles is thus shown to have been fully approved by Penn, who perhaps was aware that in 1629, having "obtained the opinion of the judges that privilege of parliament did not protect a member from prosecution after the close of the session for offences committed during it," the Attorney-

[1] *N. Eng. Hist. and Gen. Register*, vol. xxvi. pp. 423, 424.

[2] Ibid., p. 427.

[3] The plantation referred to must have been the one near the northwestern boundary of the manor, for which patent was issued in 1705, as per minutes of the Board of Property, *Pa. Arch.*, 2d ser., vol. xix. p. 473.

General, Sir Robert Heath,[1] instituted proceedings against Holles, Eliot, Selden, and other members, and obtained judgment against them of imprisonment during the King's pleasure.

Penn's description of William Biles is not upheld by later historians, whose estimates are condensed in Dr. George Smith's statement,[2] that "He was a man of ability and the strictest integrity." Logan, sharing Penn's animosity, said of him,[3] "he very much influences that debauched County of Bucks, in which there is now scarce any one man of worth left."

However, we find that on 4th mo. 12, 1705, William Biles complained to the Assembly "against the Justices and Sheriff of the County of *Philadelphia*, for a Breach of Priviledge," and it was ordered to be considered the next week. On the 19th the House decided[4] "That it is a Breach of Priviledge of this House, that any Member duly elected to serve in Assembly, shall, without the Leave of the House, be summoned or drawn, or in any wise compelled, during the Session or Continuance of Assembly, to appear at any inferior Court in this Province, upon any Pleas or Complaints, excepting for Treason, Felony, or Breach of the Peace," and in the afternoon, upon further consideration and debate, it was decided that the Sheriff who summoned William Biles to answer the action against him, and the four Justices of the Court who denied him "his Priviledge by over-ruling his Plea in that Behalf, have committed a manifest Breach of Priviledge against this House."

On the 20th a message from the Governor to the House of Representatives was drawn up, read in the Council,[5] and approved of, in which he stated that William Biles had used the most scandalous and seditious expressions against him,

[1] *Dict. of Nat. Biog.*, vol. xxv. p. 347.
[2] *Hist. Delaware Co., Pa.*, p. 447.
[3] *Penn-Logan Corresp.*, vol. ii. p. 34.
[4] *Votes of Assembly*, vol. i. pt. 2, p. 43.
[5] *Colonial Records*, vol. ii. p. 205.

and he demanded that they expel Biles from the House and advise him of their action without delay. This message was read in the House that day and ordered to be read again the next day. On the 21st, after it had been again read and William Biles had withdrawn, and the matter had been debated, the minutes state that, "The Question being put, that the said *William Biles* be expelled this House, according to the Governor's Request? *It passed in* the Negative.

"*Ordered.* That an Address to the Governor be drawn concerning the said *William Biles*, which shall comprize the Opinion and Resolves of this House relating to the Premises."

On the 22d the Address, which had been prepared, was read before the House, agreed to, and ordered to be signed by the Speaker and presented to the Governor, who on the 23d laid it before the Council. In it the House stated that, while not justifying such words as were alleged to have been spoken, nevertheless, the manner of proceedings against William Biles was very offensive to the House, and that the Sheriff who served the writ and the Justices who heard the case committed a manifest breach of privilege against the House; and as they were tender of the privileges of the House, so they would gladly show their resentment of all indignities offered to the Governor; but they found no sufficient ground for expelling William Biles from the House, and requested that he be given an opportunity to call and vindicate himself, so far as he can.

The minutes of Council show that it was the unanimous opinion of the Board that it was useless to spend longer time conferring with the then present House, and was most advisable to end further debates by dismissing them. Accordingly the Governor requested the attendance of the Speaker with the whole House, made them a sharp speech, refused to let the Speaker be heard in vindication of the House, and dismissed them.

James Logan, in a long letter to William Penn,[1] stated substantially that—

[1] *Penn-Logan Corresp.*, vol. ii. pp. 131–133.

"The Yearly Meeting sent for Biles to town, and condemned him for it, and made some intercession in his behalf, stating it would be generous in the Governour to forgive him all; the Assembly also in 12th mo. interceded for him and the Governour assured Edward Shippen and the other messengers from the House that he never designed to injure W. Biles, and gave them his word that if ever he found cause to give him any further trouble he would first acquaint them therewith. In 1st mo. William Biles relying upon the assurances of Edward Shippen and others concluded he might safely venture to town. He met the Governour, shook hands with him, and all seemed well; yet the Govr. went to Robt. Ashton's and caused a writ to be drawn which he had signed and at the same time wrote a letter to Edward Shippen and the others which he took care should not be delivered until after the Sheriff had arrested Wm. Biles. These members of Assembly hurried to the Governour, with great concern, but could not move him, nor could I though I pleaded with him for nearly an hour, telling him that the Government would greatly suffer by such dishonorable proceedings. I laboured to get others to speak to him on the subject, and prevailed on the Sheriff to keep his prisoner at the public house where he had taken him, until it was evident that all intercession was in vain, when he was committed. Divers Friends were much concerned and the women took very good care of William in prison. When I came home I wrote a long remonstrative letter to the Governour, which I delivered the next day and for about an hour endeavored by the most pressing and cogent arguments to dissuade him from his course. William was kept a close prisoner for about a month, until the Governour saw he could never get any money by it, but lost his own interest with the Country and his Friends. 'Twas this, however, that first caused people to look about them. But however this ended, the disgust at one time was high."

Another writer upon the subject says,[1]—

"but finally finding the whole community incensed against him for the course he was pursuing, he released his prisoner without the fine. William was satisfied that he had allowed the warmth of his feelings to get the better of his judgment when he had spoken the honest convictions of his mind, relative to the weak-minded, quarrelsome Governor, and he hesitated not to condemn his so speaking. It does not appear but that he was as useful in religious as well as civil concerns afterwards, as he had been before this affair took place."

[1] *The Friend*, vol. xxviii. p. 109.

(To be continued.)